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ABSTRACT

Located in the heart of the Mid-Hudson area, Poughkeepsie is in one of the fastest growing regions of New York State, but the city itself has grown very little in the last five decades. The local Model Cities agency has created a target area which includes most of the older part of the city. In July 1967, the population was 35,970. A total of 26,400 of these individuals were 16 years or older and about two-fifths lived in the target area. Around 3,400 or 30 percent of the residents of the older area were nonwhite. Labor force participation rates were higher for nonwhites than for whites, 69 and 55 percent, respectively. The unemployment rate for the Poughkeepsie labor area was 2.5 percent but was 11.6 percent in the target area. An estimate was also made for the underemployed which revealed that there were 2,300 additional people in the target area who were not able to find suitable work. Combined with the unemployment rate, this yielded a rate of 27.6 percent. (BC)

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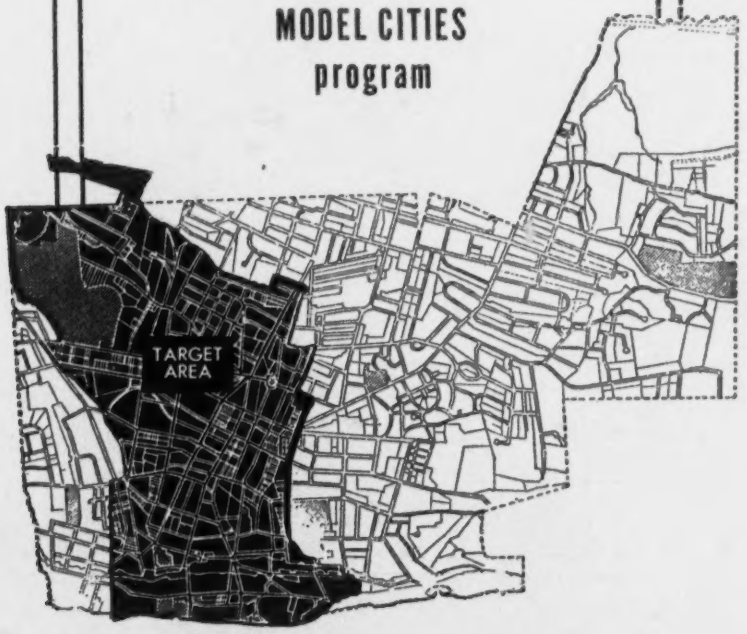
THE POUGHKEEPSIE SURVEY

A REPORT ON
EMPLOYMENT AND
UNEMPLOYMENT
IN A "TARGET AREA"
under the
MODEL CITIES
program



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STATE OF NEW YORK
Nelson A. Rockefeller, Governor

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
M.P. Catherwood, Industrial Commissioner

DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT
Alfred L. Green, Executive Director

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This report is based on the Poughkeepsie Urban Employment Survey, conducted door to door, and employing more than 500 college students as interviewers and about 130 volunteer field supervisors.

John J. McQuade, Associate Economist of the State Labor Department's Division of Employment, designed the questionnaire, directed the survey, and prepared the report, under the general supervision of Principal Economist Louis Schisa.

Mrs. Sheila Newman and Mrs. Mary Brown, staff members of the local Model City agency, were active in all phases of the field survey, assisting in recruiting trainees, preparing assignments, and guiding and screening field work. Mrs. Ann Buchholz, a member of the Neighborhood Volunteer Service of Poughkeepsie, coordinated the activities of supervisors and interviewers. The assistance of Mrs. Louise Pfuetze of the Dutchess Community College faculty was invaluable; she helped assign students to the field enumeration, and then with other faculty members and students of Community College, Vassar, and Marist College—all of Poughkeepsie—she also helped in field work. Peter Eustace and William Conklin, Labor Market Analysts in the Division of Employment, worked in the initial phases of the survey and in the editing of completed interview schedules.

Irvin Kuper, Editor

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The POUGHKEEPSIE SURVEY

A report on employment and unemployment in a "Target Area" under the Model Cities program

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INTRODUCTION

The Model Cities program attacking social, economic and physical problems in selected slum and blighted areas was established under the federal Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966. The cities awarded grants under this program are expected to give high priority to manpower problems in those areas. To help the hard-core unemployed, local Model Cities agencies undertake to find out who they are, where they live, how they can be helped in preparing for and then finding employment.

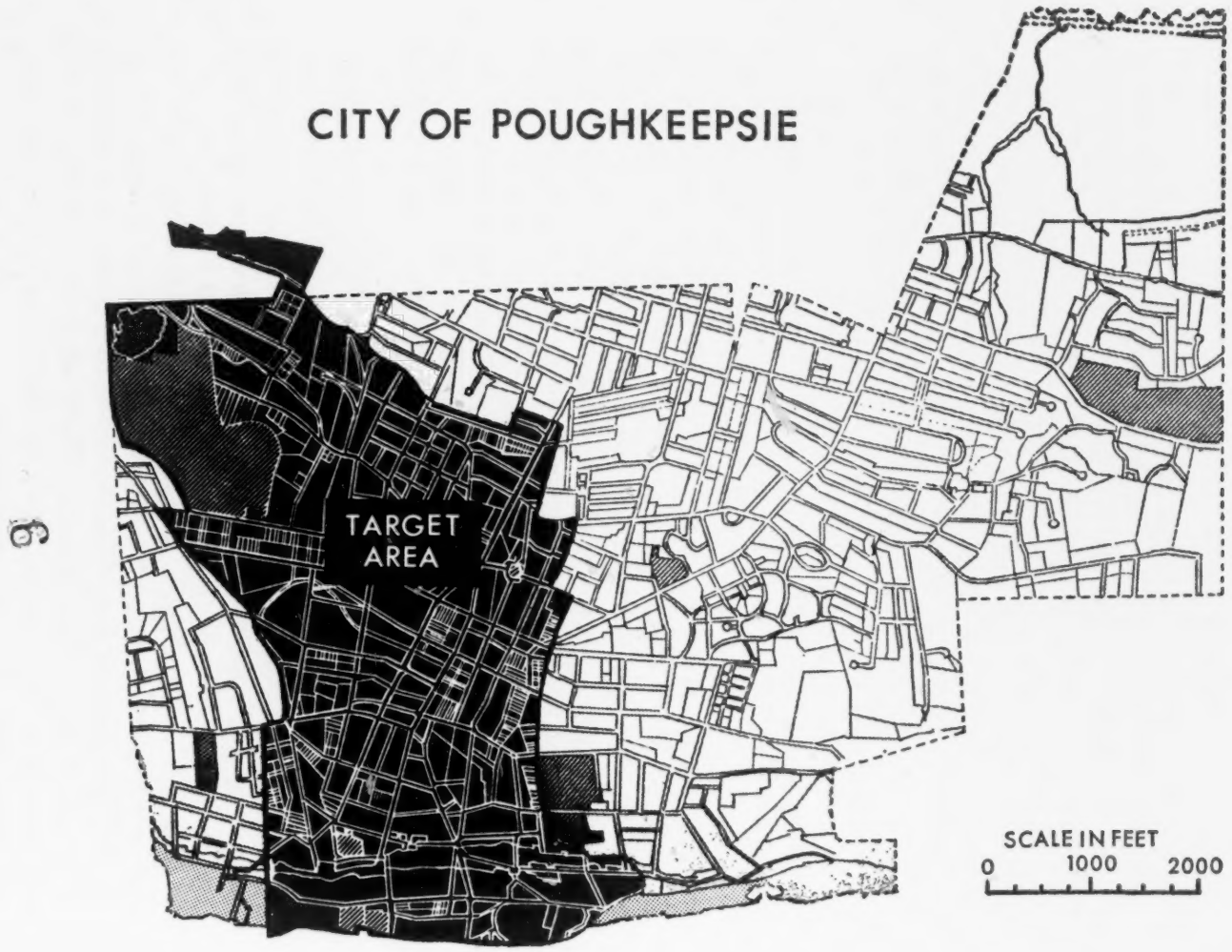
Awarded designation as a "model city" under this program, the City of Poughkeepsie committed itself to action to reduce unemployment and to enlarge employment and training opportunities in its "target area." But the economic status of Target Area residents must first be identified and classified before appropriate action can be taken.

Some preliminary estimates of program dimensions were incorporated in the initial proposal by the Model Cities agency in Poughkeepie, but these were based admittedly on inadequate information. A survey to determine the labor-force status of Target Area residents was then suggested. Subsequently, the Office of Manpower Development in the Division of Employment, in cooperation with the local Model Cities agency, agreed to provide technical direction in a house-by-house survey in the Target Area. One-fourth of the housing units were visited by the survey staff, their residents being asked to complete the questionnaire.

The survey was made in the spring of 1968 and its findings are presented in this report. Its objective was the identification and measurement of the elements of economic status in the surveyed area. Such information has long been needed.

Early in this report, an estimated 11.6 per cent of the labor force in the Target Area is given as "unemployed" at the time of the survey. Because of the inadequacies of the usual method of estimating unemployment in slum areas, the new concept—"subemployment"—was used; an explanation of it is on page 10.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that neither the older nor the newer method can, of itself, produce unflawed figures. But if the information reported does contribute to a better understanding of the social and economic conditions in which the residents of the surveyed area live, the remedies for their employment problems should be that much easier to prescribe.


CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE
TARGET AREA
SCALE IN FEET
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The TARGET AREA in the CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE

The City of Poughkeepsie is located in the heart of the Mid-Hudson Area, one of the fastest-growing regions of New York State. The city itself, however, like many older cities, has grown very little in the last four or five decades.

In recent years, a number of leading firms have established new plants in or near Poughkeepsie, turning out data-processing equipment, electronic components, dairy and other process equipment. Another Poughkeepsie firm, a printer of children's books, is prominent in its field. But the advantages which once made the city the "Queen of the Hudson" are now of limited value. In fact, the age, congestion, and general pattern of its earlier growth may now be obstacles to its further development.

Poughkeepsie's urban decay is not unique; every older city in the country has a similar problem. A strong urban renewal program, however, is already under way in some parts of Poughkeepsie. The local Model Cities agency has identified a Target Area, encompassing much of what is called the Old City, upon which it will focus its restoration and revitalization program.

- The population of the City of Poughkeepsie, as of July 1, 1967, was 35,970[1].
- 26,400 of the City's estimated population were 16 years and older.
- 11,600, more than two-fifths of the population who were 16 years and older, lived in the Target Area.
- 3,400, almost 30 per cent of the Target Area residents 16 years and older, were nonwhite.

1 Estimate of New York State Department of Health.

The LABOR FORCE[1]

- 6,900 persons 16 years and older were in the labor force.
- About two-thirds of the labor force were white.
- However, a higher proportion of nonwhites than whites were in the labor force:
  —69 per cent of the nonwhites, compared with
  —55 per cent of the whites
- The proportion of nonwhite men in the labor force was higher than that of white men:
  —83 per cent for nonwhite men
  —73 per cent for white men
- There was a much greater difference in the percentages of nonwhite women and white women in the labor force:
  —59 per cent for nonwhite women
  —40 per cent for white women
- Almost 25 percent of the white population were 65 and older, compared with only 7 per cent of the nonwhite population.
- But in that age group, the participation rates of the whites were much lower than those of nonwhites, probably because, at 65 and older, they are financially better able to retire.
- The low participation rates of whites—especially of white women—in the 65-and-older age group, combined with the high proportion of that group in the total white population, reduced considerably the overall participation rates of whites.

1 Data throughout this study refer to the Poughkeepsie target area.

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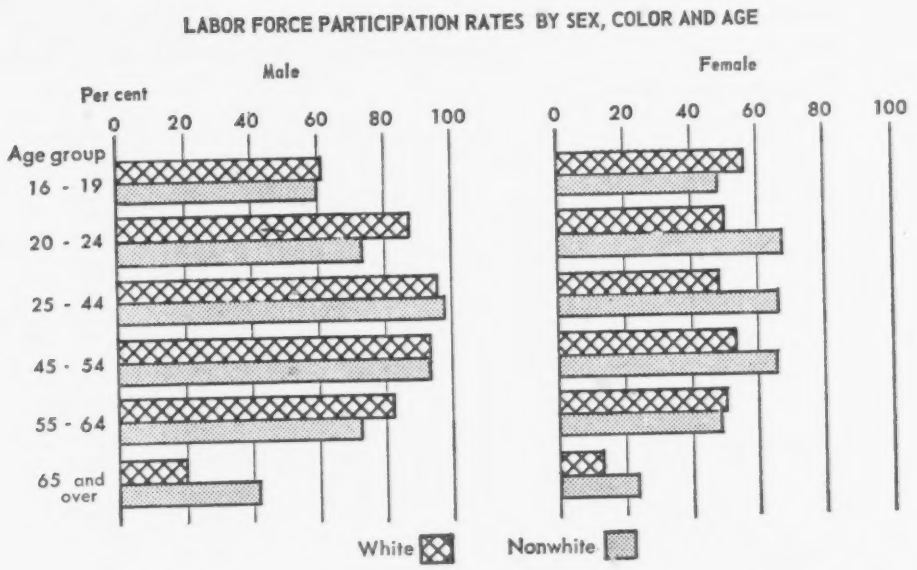
Table 1. Labor force participation, by sex, color, and age

Age Group	Male						Female					
	White Population			Nonwhite Population			White Population			Nonwhite Population		
	Total	Labor Force	Rate	Total	Labor Force	Rate	Total	Labor Force	Rate	Total	Labor Force	Rate
16–19	345	210	61	205	123	60	350	196	56	280	135	48
20–24	389	337	87	114	83	73	402	201	50	253	170	67
25–44	1110	1053	95	664	647	97	1079	520	48	773	511	66
45–54	559	520	93	197	184	93	686	363	53	262	171	65
55–64	511	420	82	162	118	73	712	358	50	170	83	49
65 and over	769	157	20	105	44	42	1180	153	13	131	30	23
Totals	3683	2697	73	1447	1199	83	4409	1791	40	1869	1100	59

NOTE: Detailed information by age, sex, and color was not available for another 188 individuals who were therefore not included in the population figures. Of these, 131 were in the labor force.



The EMPLOYED

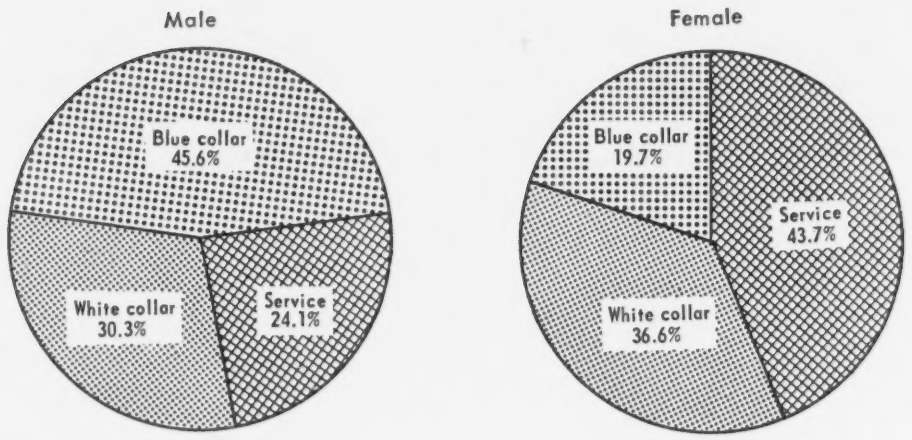
- Proportionately three times as many white as nonwhite men were in professional, technical and managerial occupations.
- Only about one-sixth of white men were in service jobs, compared with almost 40 per cent of nonwhite men. (The proportion, nationwide, of nonwhite men employed in service jobs is only 16 per cent.)
- Of employed white men:
  - —36 per cent were in white-collar occupations
  - —29 per cent were in blue-collar jobs
  - —17 per cent were in service jobs
- Of employed nonwhite men:
  - —17 per cent were in white-collar occupations
  - —21 per cent were in blue-collar jobs
  - —40 per cent were in service jobs.
- Almost half the employed white women were in white-collar jobs, compared with 18 per cent of employed nonwhite women.
- Two-thirds of nonwhite women were in service occupations, compared with 50 per cent of employed nonwhite women in the nation as a whole.

Table 2. Occupational distribution of employed persons, by sex and color

(In per cent)

Occupational group	Male		Female	
	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
All groups	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Professional, technical and managerial	15.5	5.2	9.9	7.1
Clerical and sales	20.5	12.1	37.5	10.5
Service	17.3	39.9	30.9	66.1
Machine trades	11.9	5.6	9.0	4.8
Bench work	6.2	5.6	11.0	8.7
Structural work	10.1	7.3	0.3	—
Processing	0.4	2.6	0.6	0.4
Miscellaneous	18.1	21.7	0.8	2.4

EMPLOYED PERSONS BY MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUP
BY SEX
(In per cent)



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The UNEMPLOYED

- An estimated 11.6 per cent of the labor force in the Target Area—about 800—were unemployed. The unemployment rate in the Poughkeepsie labor area (Dutchess County) was 2.5 per cent. But in the Target Area:
  - —15.2 per cent of the nonwhites were unemployed, and
  - —9.7 per cent of the whites.
- In most age groups unemployment rates for nonwhites were higher than for whites:
  - —about 16 per cent of nonwhite men 25–44 years old, compared with approximately 5 per cent of white men in the same age group;
  - —about 21 per cent of nonwhite women 20–24 years old, compared with 5 per cent of white women in that age group.
- Surprisingly, more white than nonwhite male teen-agers were unemployed: 40 per cent against 25 per cent. The probable reason for this is that many nonwhites do not become part of the labor force because of the fewer job opportunities open to them; and since they are not part of the labor force, they are not counted among the unemployed even if they are not working. (See explanation of "Sub-employment," page 10.)
- The unemployment rate declines moderately as the teen-agers, both white and nonwhite, enter the 20–24 age group; however, unemployment remains high in the latter group too, especially for nonwhite females.

Table 3. Unemployment rates by age, sex, and color

(In per cent)

Age Group	Unemployment rate					
	Total		Male		Female	
	White:	Nonwhite	White :	Nonwhite	White:	Nonwhite
16–19	33.3	31.5	39.5	25.2	26.5	35.6
20–24	7.4	17.4	9.2	10.8	4.5	20.6
25–44	5.4	14.3	5.4	16.2	10.0	11.9
45–54	5.4	12.4	6.7	12.0	3.6	12.9
55–64	8.5	6.5	7.4	11.0	9.8	(1)
65 and older	12.6	5.4	8.3	(1)	17.0	13.3
All age groups	9.7	15.2	9.3	15.0	10.4	15.5

[1] Data not sufficient to compute valid rate.

UNEMPLOYMENT: THE REASONS WHY

- The principal reasons given by the unemployed for their job-finding difficulties[1] included:
  - —no work available in their line;
  - —lack of necessary education, training, skills or experience;
  - —the age factor;
  - —suitable working hours not available.
- At least half of the reasons given are attributable in one way or another to a lack of training, education, or suitable job experience.

1 About one-sixth of the unemployed gave no reasons for their job-finding difficulties.

Table 4. Reasons given by unemployed for their job-finding difficulties, by sex and color

(In per cent)

Reasons	Male		Female	
	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
Totals[1]	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No jobs available in line of work	12.7	37.8	17.4	36.1
Age - too young	18.8	4.9	7.3	8.3
Age - too old	7.9	4.9	7.3	3.7
Lack of necessary skills or experience	7.9	4.9	9.6	8.3
Lack of necessary education or training	13.3	11.0	17.4	12.0
Health problem - physical disability	2.4	0.0	9.6	0.0
Personal problems - police record, bad debts	3.0	4.9	0.0	0.0
Transportation	0.0	4.9	9.6	0.0
Discrimination	2.4	0.0	0.0	3.7
Family responsibility - care of children	0.0	0.0	2.2	8.3
Suitable hours not available	7.9	11.0	7.3	3.7
Other	23.6	15.9	12.4	15.7

1 Totals may not equal 100.0 per cent because of rounding.

EDUCATION and EMPLOYMENT

- The better-educated workers are more likely to get the jobs:
  —only 11 per cent of the unemployed were high school graduates;
  —three-quarters of the unemployed had no more than eight grades of schooling.
- However, almost two-thirds of the unemployed expressed willingness to return to school for training, while more than 80 per cent were in favor of on-the-job training:
  —but teen-agers expressed reluctance about going back to school—not surprising, since many were school dropouts;
  —also not too receptive to more schooling were women in the 25–44 age group, many of whom were reentering the job market and eager to find employment quickly to supplement family income.

Table 5. Percentages of employed and unemployed, by education and color

School grades completed	Total				White				Nonwhite			
	Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	5966[1]	100.0	778	100.0	4056	100.0	433	100.0	1910	100.0	345	100.0
8 or less	3112	52.2	580	74.6	1995	49.2	324	74.8	1117	58.5	256	74.2
9 – 11	1955	32.8	109	14.0	1439	35.5	66	15.2	516	27.0	43	12.5
12 plus	899	15.0	89	11.4	622	15.3	43	9.9	277	14.5	46	13.3

[1] Detailed information by education and color was not available for 174 individuals in the target area.

NOTE: Unemployed 16 years and older are the subjects of this study. But in estimating school years completed, the usual procedure is to count people 25 years and older, on the assumption that schooling is completed by the age of 25. Hence the percentages given in this report may be skewed somewhat.

The SUB-EMPLOYED

In November 1966, a series of intensive surveys of 10 slum areas in eight United States cities revealed that estimates of "unemployment" were failing to give a true picture of the economic condition of slum residents. So the "sub-employment index" was conceived. The "sub-employed" included[1]:

—the unemployed—that is, those who are actively looking for work but unable to find it;

—those working only part-time but trying to find full-time work;

—lowest-income workers in full-time jobs: heads of households under 65 who earn less than $60 a week; and others earning less than $56 a week.

—half the nonparticipants in the labor force in the male 20–64 age group;

—an estimated "undercount" group. In slum neighborhoods, the number of adult males who are present and "countable" has often been found to be improbably low. The assumption was therefore made that there should be about the same proportions of men and women in the Target Area as in the population at large; it would be further assumed that half the "unfound" males are unemployed.

Including these groups in the Poughkeepsie Target Area would place the sub-employment index at 29 per cent. *In the Poughkeepsie study, however, it was decided to delete the vague undercount group and to attempt a more positive identification of the nonparticipants, by asking a series of questions of persons interviewed.* Those considered sub-employed then included:

—about 800 unemployed;

—about 60 part-time workers looking for full-time jobs;

—about 140 persons under 62 years of age earning less than $60 a week in full-time jobs;

—about 1,300 currently not working or looking for work, but who would enter the job market if some personal obstacle could be removed.

The 2,300 of sub-employed in the Poughkeepsie Target Area then gave a sub-employment rate of 27.6 per cent.

1 In the November 1966 surveys.

Table 6. Sub-employment rates for residents of target area 16 years and older, by age, sex, and color

(In per cent)

Age group	Sub-employment rate					
	Male		Female		Total	
	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
16–19	51.5	41.8	46.9	52.5	49.2	47.5
20–24	14.8	19.4	33.6	40.5	23.1	34.5
25–44	8.0	17.9	39.5	35.3	21.1	26.8
45–54	10.4	13.8	29.1	32.0	19.3	23.6
55–64	11.0	24.5	27.4	27.2	19.3	25.7
65+	43.1	33.3	47.1	44.7	45.0	38.1
All age groups	16.6	21.8	36.1	37.4	25.5	30.0

The POOR

A "poor" person in an urban area is a member of a family receiving cash welfare payments, or whose annual net income, judged by size of family, is below a specified level.

- 16 per cent [1] of those 16 years and older who responded to the income portion of the questionnaire were members of poor families:
  - —almost 15 per cent[2] of white respondents were at the poverty level; and
  - —almost 20 per cent[2] of nonwhites.
- There was a positive correlation between age factors and earnings:
  - —about three-quarters of employed men in the prime working-age brackets earned more than $90 a week;
  - —about 63 per cent of the very young (16–19) employed men earned less than $60 a week;
  - —half of the employed men 65 and over earned less than $60 a week;
  - —about one-quarter of employed women in the 25–64 age groups earned more than $90 a week;
  - —three-fifths of employed women in the 20–24 age group earned between $61 and $90 a week;
  - —considerably more women than men in every age bracket earned less than $60 a week.

1 The percentage would be 13 per cent if families of one or two individuals were excluded, on the assumption that they are made up primarily of retired people.

2 Excluding the presumptively "retired" people, the figures for whites at the poverty level would be 10 per cent, and for nonwhites "over 20 per cent."

Table 7. Members of poor families as per cent of total individuals, by family size and color

Family size	Total		White		Nonwhite	
	Total individuals	Members of poor families as per cent of total individuals	Total individuals	Members of poor families as per cent of total individuals	Total individuals	Members of poor families as per cent of total individuals
One	1179	32.6	939	36.2	240	18.3
Two	2542	14.1	2002	13.7	540	15.4
Three	1716	5.6	1268	6.2	448	3.8
Four	1379	12.0	1082	10.0	297	19.2
Five	1086	9.1	769	9.0	317	9.5
Six	545	18.3	314	16.6	231	20.8
Seven	305	21.3	149	8.7	156	33.3
Eight	193	43.5	44	29.5	149	47.7
Nine or more	233	51.1	149	32.2	84	84.5
Total	9178	16.0	6716	14.8	2462	19.2

Table 8. Levels of weekly earnings of employed persons by age, sex, and color

(In per cent)

Weekly earnings	All age groups					
	16–19	20–24	25–44	45–54	55–64	65+
TOTAL						
Male						
Less than $60	63	7	3	6	6	50
$61–90	29	34	21	23	30	18
$91 and over	8	59	76	71	64	32
Female						
Less than $60	74	35	33	42	38	83
$61–90	26	61	39	35	36	7
$91 and over	0	4	28	23	26	10
NONWHITE						
Male						
Less than $60	73	0	2	3	16	23
$61–90	18	61	28	26	46	22
$91 and over	9	39	70	71	38	55
Female						
Less than $60	63	39	37	53	61	100
$61–90	37	49	37	20	28	0
$91 and over	0	12	26	27	11	0

The JOB SEARCH

The principal methods of looking for work are listed in Table 9 below. Placing or answering newspaper ads is the method most frequently used, particularly by white females. The New York State Employment Service is also widely used, especially by nonwhite women. Men, both white and nonwhite, are more likely than women to apply directly to the employer. More white than nonwhite jobseekers evidently have friends or relatives who might be helpful in the job search.

Table 9. Types of job search used by unemployed, by color

(In per cent)

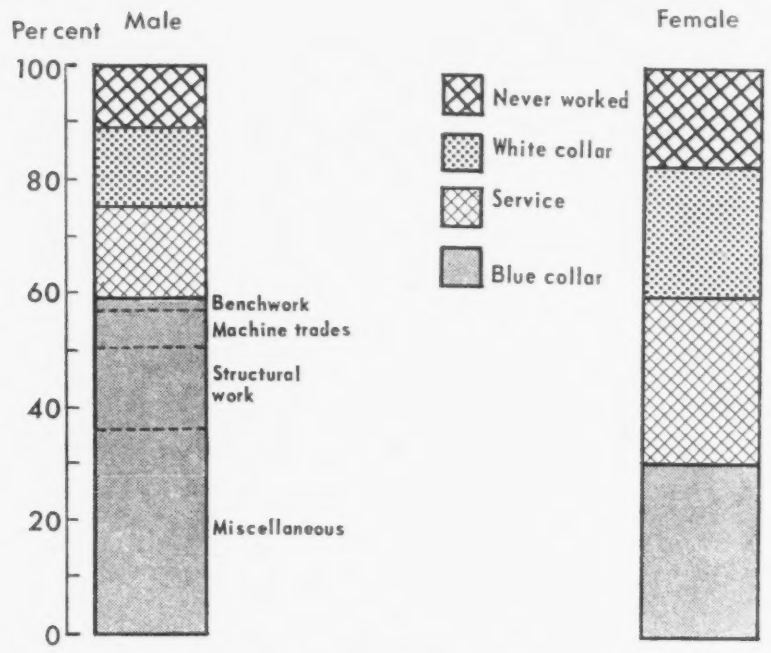
Type of job search	Total	White	Nonwhite
New York State Employment Service	24.4	18.5	31.0
Private employment agency	3.3	3.6	3.0
Employer directly	23.6	25.2	21.9
Friends or relatives	11.0	13.0	8.8
Placed or answered ads	26.5	34.5	17.5
Other	11.2	5.2	17.8

OCCUPATIONS OF THE UNEMPLOYED

The evidence (see chart below) indicates that only a small percentage of the unemployed have white-collar backgrounds. Considering the scarcity of qualified clerical workers, this suggests that many of them don't have the skills necessary for successful competition for such jobs.

- Almost three-fifths of the men had been in blue-collar jobs.
- Another one-sixth of the men were in service-type jobs.
- More than 30 per cent of the women had been in blue-collar work.
- Almost 30 per cent of the women had been in service-type work.

UNEMPLOYED PERSONS BY MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUP, BY SEX



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EXPLANATION OF TERMS

EMPLOYED PERSONS comprise: (a) all those who during the survey week did any work at all as paid employees; worked in their own business, profession, or farm; or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in enterprises operated by members of the family; and (b) all those who were not working but who had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor-management dispute, or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid by their employers for the time off, and whether or not they were seeking other jobs.

Each employed person was counted once even though he or she may have held more than one job.

Excluded were persons whose only activity consisted of work in their homes (such as housework and painting or repairing own home) or volunteer work for religious, charitable, and similar organizations.

UNEMPLOYED PERSONS comprise all persons 16 and over who did not work during the survey week, who made specific effort to find jobs within the previous four weeks, and who were available for work during the survey week (unless temporary illness prevented). Also included as unemployed were those who did not work at all, were available for work and were waiting to be called back to jobs from which they had been laid off, or were waiting to report to new wage or salary jobs within 30 days.

The CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE is the total of all civilians classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the criteria described above.

The LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE represents the number of employed, plus the number of unemployed as a percentage of all civilians 16 years and older in the household population.

NOT IN LABOR FORCE: all civilians 16 years and older who were not classified as employed or unemployed. These persons were further classified as "engaged in own home housework," "in school," "unable to work because of long-term physical or mental illness," "retired," and "other." The "other" group includes, for the most part, those reported as too old to work, the voluntary idle, and seasonal workers for whom the survey week fell in an "off" season and who were not reported as unemployed. Persons doing only incidental unpaid family work (less than 15 hours) were also classified as not in the labor force.

OCCUPATION OF WORKER for the employed applies to the job held in the week before the interview. Persons with two or more jobs were classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours during the survey week. The unemployed were classified according to their latest full-time civilian job lasting two weeks or more. Occupational categories were based on the 3rd Edition of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

MEMBER OF POOR FAMILY: a person was deemed "poor" if he (she) was a member of a family which received cash welfare payments, *or* whose annual net income in relation to family size ranged from $1,600 for one person to $7,800 for 13 or more in a family.

The SUB-EMPLOYED included not only the unemployed as defined previously, but also (1) anyone aged 16 years or older who usually worked less than 35 hours a week because he could find only part-time work, but who would work full-time if the opportunity were available,

(2) persons under 62 years of age who earned less than $60 a week at a full-time job, (3) anyone aged 16 years and over who, in the survey week, was not looking for a job because of circumstances like family responsibilities, poor motivations or attitudes, etc., but who would be available for work if these conditions could be changed.